The Apocalypse Must Make Us Brave

For Munira, my love and orbit;

For my family, whomever and wherever they are;

For the oppressed under amerika, patriarchy, white supremacy, and colonialism;

For winter, and her insensate fullness.

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A Long Time's Coming

Hatred of the self
Transmutes a childhood.

A bundle of mother's joy
The aryan perfection father loves
Like God would.

Your Christ is a revolutionary Palestinian
I am sitting in the front seat
Watching amerikan normal whizz past
Woosh --- Youth full of psycho dreams
As you say you wanted a daughter
Mommy, please, I've told you
That's what I dream of being, too...

Locked the bedroom door with my sister inside
By spirit, not blood. A cage of tradition cast
Now, grown, the mirror carries
An unkempt face and person
Not unlike a lush garden
Groomed to be Adam when I am Eden

This cruelty has quietly, patiently tormented me
How could I be the victim, you cry,
while you ignored my pleas,
For they carry truths beyond your books and forced services
On raising Godly men

By a miracle, I am here, lustfully living
Scars not self-made
Tough as nails and weak as grass
Bowing in the breeze

Repair and reconciliation
Are not always the same coin.
Anton calls it, Buffalo Bill calls it
Demonize me
As I see Bates on the screen and think
That's what I am, for wanting to be free

The slingshotting crack of abuse, guilt, and shame:
Orders to do the painful work
To heal what you've done to *me*

Hatred of the self will make a man of me
Loving who I am, however,
A bundle of flaws and gentle touches
That spills from the blankets onto the floor
And babbles like an infant…

Fourth of July

There is a whole ‘nother person
in this house,
and they love me
right?

There’s this *thing* rushing towards me.
I worry one day it’ll catch me
Hear it,
Lumbering in the distance,
just beyond the tree line
deep between the waves
And I freeze, little more than a doe in the high beams

There’s a dark cloud loitering above
A feeling that has become all-consumptive
Towards the back of my head.
Swollen with rain.

There’s a whole lotta people
in these houses
and they love me
and they don’t try

The fireworks explode and our nation likes to pretend
War never comes home.

Angola Rodeo

Locked away in cells, clanging with echoing ghosts
Brought out in weighty chains, very much alive
Paraded around to work, to ease the pain: whose?
Some spectacle of anger, fireworks' relief,
    Lassoed cattle to the slaughter

A threat in festival garb, a circus and bread to share
    Dance for your lords
    They were already cackling
    Before unlocking the shackles
        Now, they have their disguise.

Taken away in the violent name of Law
Strung around the corral, coerced
Dancing feet chased with bullets in the dirt
Battle royale becomes saddled humiliation
    With a wider mix of folk in the audience
    Than rich white men draped in cigar smoke.

That's how *it* burrows into the mind we all carry
together, connected, speaking through pathways unseen
Watch the rodeo, see how well the slaves laugh
and enjoy their freedom: whose?

This is what your reformation gets you.

I Begged to Sit on the Other Side of the Psych Ward

The white walls of sterile home
Vibrating in the edges of my vision
I don’t know what to do,
Erase my heavy form
Call it failure, truffle pig digging for the roots

There’s anger engulfing us
Beyond judgment or justification
There’s loneliness decaying us
A familiar numbing gut sensation
You look and you don’t see,
This flesh betrays me.
My voice and feet tread too loudly
The scales are falling, free
Sam was grasping at my pant leg
Sobbing for me to stay
They told me too many times to count--
This thing will lock me away.

I watch the officers drag in
People just like me.
They strip me of my clothing, disarmed
Not even a pen to carry
Tell me it’s missed connections,
With the Bible passed among the prisoners.

And I’ll remind you that I’ve read it, probably more than you.

My flesh betrays my mind---

This thing between my thighs.

Your father models God, and mine would

Tell me I’m just like him.

So concerned with finding rest

in the face of armageddon

So preoccupied with our lack of value

While the heart is pumping blood

What tender fools we are

When the officers divide us

What lovely tools we’ve been given

When we’re forced to hand them over.

Curled in Bloody Union

The moon grows and releases, the blood rush when you clutch me above and beside and beneath you, the nails scratching at each others' skin to grab on enough and we'll not let go. Pink and purple united in bruises on biceps and glistening thighs like the cotton sunset clouds in the West. This is home, the barren thirsty wasteland and together there is so much time for clocks are tools of oppression and we live by the rule of bodies not our own held eternal in the sky, monuments of time and the endlessness' love for us. I know you feel that, as my lips trace your tender flesh, primal oozings telling me to bite and take of you, then to roll on my back and purr as you do the same. Begging, pleading for you to hurt me, slap me, punch me so hard I see the stars that don't ever leave your eyes. What can we do when suspended in this amber moment; my hands pressing your chest and drawing my imperfect etchings along your gorgeous form, a feeble mortal worshipper at your altar. O my everything I encircle, run until I am exhausted and faltering. Then further still. Your wounds lay bare and I lick, loving the taste of your coppery vulnerability. Open up for me and I follow the programming of my DNA, surely written and compiled for you alone. Wash over me, press your strong hand on my head and hold me amongst your thighs and let me release my hurt and hunger and absolute adoration into you, upon these pages, for I am a mouth and a pen is no different than a tongue, a pulsing sword. I crave to hear those musings.

Chain Smoking, Breaking

I almost let her die.
Because I am distracted by the looks I get
In the mirror, I see us standing
Together and fail to capture meaning.
Often those voices in my head
Ring; lost souls, hell's in the darkness
and I cannot do sleeping often.
Love is a warzone, a clamor,
A change at moments notice
Hold this down, I must care,
Forgetting our priests and medics, forgetting the injured
Learning to bear my own way
And how I hope you are there, alive.

At a moments notice
Help came for me
I may have lost this desperate fight
    against that occupying worm within my mind.
How can I accept my failure
to show up where I am needed
        Show up! Show up!
    Sit in the misery and filth
    With who you love
    Who is worth fighting, forgetting
I sob, I don't want this world to end

No one can die and yet we cannot live like this

I am in love with the beauty of both...

With the rambling of the brook,

The quiet moments,

The loving creatures we call friends

And family and comrades and kin

Enemies close, lovers close too

And those who need to crowd

And huddle together for warmth

I feel a dreadful bubbling

As my mind unspools again

Someday, it will hold together

Not like a solid eternal thing,

But like the way the river and the clouds connect through rain.

Gun Shy

Sleight of hand with who is doing what

The ball is beneath the fourth cup

Lift it flashily from the velvet table

And the dealer must've palmed it away, surely.

Convinced by individualism

I am the fault, the source

the system is fine, it's *you*

Who must repent, who must change before the rest

Start without fighting and they push you first

Sometimes it's meant for you

All the pain and hurt you've caused

Bursting out, sometimes meant for the system

But who do you shove?

We're all selling our blood to vampires.

Sometimes, it is meant for oneself;

The violence is a deep self-hatred

A self-inflicted gunshot wound

On someone else's skull.

And often, it is all of these.

A big blonde bear stares me down,

Maw open, raring to rip me apart

I made you feel this way

When I brandished my weapon in weakness

Now, I brandish it in fear

This animal wants me dead and is fishing for a reason.

I wept for the lichens, too

I cried when they spoke
Of the sleeping mosses
who will never wake up
The only space for their bodies in graveyards
since our minds are wastelands, too
Long neon strips
Cathedrals to guilt
Pleasure is growth and pain,
But as I walk my block of concrete
Nothing washes over me.
As I watch the bouginvillea blooms.
Swirl in circles in your courtyard
Your eyes pierce me, I am a humble beetle crawling on your arm
Any second, now
Bend over and blow me away,
I am trying to remember their names through the noise.

Look to my ancestors
They look further, westward
Endlessly… ignoring reality
willfully forgetting the tender mosses
Until this land, *their* land but not their land
Is buried in filthy gray
and tar black headstones.

Sweating, Try to Stop

Let my love run freely
As herds of triumphantly wild horses.
Does it wander lazily through your mind
like ghost lights up on the mountains,
Butcher paper crumples along the horizon
From the bloody slab of meat,
    wrapped after you cut it out of me.

Notes of despair rushing---
A torrential, pushing beauty,
    Pouring from the ambling skies
Grey clouds meandering, pulsating--
Blue eyes hazy with disbelief
    Your answers brush tangents against the curve of mind
Pray to the spirit strung between
    Our marionetted hearts
The fibres fall away,
    burnt to fray.
    So we crumple into threadbare heaps
Upon each other
Upon each breath an urgency
    I mustn't ignore

Tease me, the way you pull the depths of everything
    out into the breathy room, laid out like magazine clippings.

I Need a Dyke Psychiatrist

Doc, there's this sluggish fluid swirling behind my eyes. It hurts, every morning, when I realize I must enter the world in a body, dancing, stumbling. Dressing up will help, so does a bit of paint on my face, and I'm exhausted from doing it every day, being put in such a place where my words mean little more than the questions I ask the folks around me.

Look, do you got something for being meaner? Sticking up for myself a bit more? I'm real scared I'll lose somebody that way and I already feel pretty tired and alone most days. Is this getting older? My pills aren't helping, they make me tired and change my body in a way I like but can't quite handle. The stimulants move me too fast, and the anxiety meds take away the noise so much I can hardly even stand the silence. Gentrification of the mind.

It feels like unless my goal is burning down what isn't working, then this is a way to do it. The wars of conquest aren't fought like they used to, my mind and my body have become the battleground and I'm still fighting with the little God inside my head telling me whatever I do is lazy or stupid or vapid or pointless.

And I wanna die so bad, sometimes, and I talk myself down from it when it makes perfect fucking sense considering how hard it is to be around people most of the time. I try to be liked and I'll just forget that and then I'll forget to like myself, and then I'm thinking about cutting or hanging or gutting the most evil thing I can get to, myself, and anyone who gets in my way...

I'm done spewing. I'm listening.

Yeah, a lot of it's systemic.

Yeah, no prescriptions will change the world. Undo the monuments to dirty blood.

Paranoia is common in people with targets on their back.

Everything I've said is.

Here comes the part where I wish you were real.

You'd probably say to drink some tea and see a friend. Make a kind meal and share it with the hungry ones I love.

I don’t Dream, Moon

My heart aches for your touch
Time pulls around, a pained breeze
I wake from dreamless sleep,
Your soft face beside me
    Delicate, peaceful, wishing you babbled in your slumber
For now, it echoes through the caverns of my soul
    How desperately I need to walk alone sometimes
    Craving perfection, defeating cancer
You ask devotion and it tells your worth
More than the mines and stockpiles
                A soft doe wanders through my mind;
                Can your dark hair in the sun
                Warm my cold neck
                Better than your hands?
Words flow without help---

Until I remember the evil
Across the globe
trampling the helpless
As we watch and sob in helplessness.

Suddenly, the frog
Enjoying the croaking midnight
    Is locked inside the wet cavern of my throat.
    Perhaps it swallows the visions when eyes close, nabbing them from the air still buzzing

Phase Walker

My mind rides wild waves
Between the words and periods.
The loneliness, pervasive
Saddling the storm upon solitary raft;
I see god and keep it to myself,
Feeling some transformation within--
A curling serpent in my belly like a maze,
A path curving away from those rooted ghosts.
They say work on being alone:
I feel alone even when you're here
when there are people close enough to touch
I feel together when I am alone, calm.
Sometimes. But, still lonely.
Can we walk together through
These material phases humming and crashing together?
And all and nothing matters;
A magnet built in halves
I am unchosen, I am undead,
I am lightning, I am glowing,
I listen to all of them
And disagree often, find the stones,
Throw them, skip them across the surface and line the path.
Trust, to be lost in fantasy is no gift
Truth weighs nothing and it is lighter
Than the sun upon my skin.

Hanoi Hannah

Your government betrays you
They ordered you to die
    Defect, GI
    Defect, GI

They'll adorn you with a medal
But only once you're dead
Ship's sinking, yank, your boots are stuck
And they'll never let you live.

Defect, GI, the rich grow richer
While you bleed lonely in the swamp
As the red and blue gunpowder paintings
Tear apart panthers and students and bums.

Defect, GI, defect, Sino's gonna get you
The barbarian becomes you
Blaspheme their murder cult
Defect GI, defect, you haven't won in decades

Capital lies, heads down tails up
In a shallow grave stomped flat
Beneath our marching, thundering feet.
    Defect GI, defect
    Nowhere's safe on stolen land.

I sat quietly, as stone would.

Unlike stone, hurting, aching, and carving alone
Licking my wounds, salve for the cuts,
bandages for the fragile things, healing oh so slowly
Holding my head where it hangs, limp as a corpse sometimes
I'm learning--
Still.

A concept,
something formless and lifeless and arguable and pointless,
Meant to raze the mountains and fill the valleys.
I desperately needed to be made into something I could love unbearably
More than our flesh, more than our blood.
As I sat at the wheel, and watched the life,
The vine blooming right there in the light, tendrils reaching like that dive those holy eagles do,
You were staring back at me, unfettered
And the light of the day glinting off your sneaking smile.
It is selfish to take credit for something beautiful
Not for its inception or the beauty itself,
To accept it is there because of your effort
To accept we are here because of our effort
And to understand you'll find answers on a random evening or morning or midnight,
smoking cigarettes. Sacred tobacco.
But never closure. These little deaths are lies. Dead ends in a maze.

All of it, every little piece can't be explained. Please, let go.
Stop searching for peace or understanding and trust your hands,
Trust how love, like water, always flows downstream.

I'm Dying Mother *(adapted and Transified, originally by Bert Hare)*

One summer's eve as the sun was setting
The wind blew soft and cool
A young man laid on his bed a-fevering
And death was in his arms

I'm dying Mother, I'm surely dying
And Hell is my awful doom
Take my hand, and press it tight
For my heart is sad with gloom

The other night as I left the meeting
The Spirit bid me friend
He said not tonight but next week, surely
I must go and dance with the dead.

I'm dyin' Mother, I'm surely dyin'

O Mother dear, go and tell my comrades
Not to do as I have done
When the Spirit calls, do not reject him
Or put Him off in time

Mother sits beside my bedside, weeping
I do my best to hold her, too
As the heat seeps in and boils my bones
The boy feels all too cruel

I'm dying Mother, I'm surely dying
And Hell is my awful doom
Take my hand, and press it tight
For my heart is sad with gloom

For after this I'll be converted
And I'll be your Christian bride
Wreathed in white, with my soul a-glowin'
Only in death could I be your wife

My love I'm dying, I'm surely leaving
God, it hurts to see your pain
If I could, I'd live with you forever
And we'd hunt men like hares on the plains

I'm dying Mother, I'm surely dyin'
And Hell is my awful doom
Take my hands, and press them tight
For my heart is sad with gloom

Moon's Falling

I've never left like this before
Always being the fleeing, injured thing
Never asking to stay behind
while they go so I may heal
Or gather the trust we need

I would seal fate by twisting in agony,
Jerking and stiff-arming in my sleep
Red thread cutting

Hung by a thin string in my sight line
Exactly where the eyes land, her pale beauty trapped in pupils

I break the lamp in fiery frenzy
You sleep through it like a log
please wake up

I leave without really saying goodbye
There is a feeling that is aching, guilt preying upon my bone
that I can never repay the love I've received
And there was nothing we could really do
The weight of your past was ravaging and
There's everything we could do
together, if I could try and sit
instead of beating with fists

and threatening to hurt

the way we've been hurt

I don't want my life to be tied like that

But deep care ropes me in

It's those cowboy genes

You say my ass looks great in

I knew it was coming, I knew what had to change

I wanted to believe I could stop the moon from crashing in

There are some things you can't change

And there are many people who will never see you for who you are.

Learning to quit that addicting visibility

Nurturing hope, faith for brighter futures

How do you say goodbye forever

when the casket is decades away?

Death is a kindness in that way

indomitable

I cannot rest, there is work to do and lunar graveyards to prepare.

Cavern

The clouds hang far in the sky, cavernous
Pupils swollen, droplets of oil black as the night around us,
glinting back the dim electric light, as you cradle me in your arms
Humming stalactites strung evenly along the awning.

Wisps of white pepper the blue day as crumbling church ceiling stucco,
The blacktop sweats; Apollo bores a vengeful arrow into my neck.
A white hot pain sure to burst, in the heavens or in my stomach
I was shorter, softer then; a pale clay golem toughening, sun-baked.

You lumber past my room with shuffling feet
In fear I know to hide my face, through thin slits reflect as you're hoping
The sorrow cradled me in your arms, slowly seeping into me.
As men throw their sadness downstream, their name remains.

A draft from your bedroom window has trailed me since I left home.
A heavy swollen nimbus, an aching low in the back, insides heaped with detritus.
Only knowing the fever of the day, shelter in the crisp cool of our cave.
A desert thirsts for rain forever; the burden her name bares.

Every part of me flecked away in the breeze and settled unbroken on our mantle
I gave you everything I had and stood there and the rain soaked me through.
I let the cold in and the cold was a black spot in the sky I had watched forever, silent.

Thunder crackles in the distance.

The rain rolls in and over itself, perpetually. Becoming snow, becoming bitter.
The year rounds again, bending towards winter, and my quarry approaches.
Now, here's the time of less and of darkness and of yearning, I hesitantly raise my bow.
The deer fears silence but I haven't learned what fear is so I become Apollo.

The voice from grown lungs echoed back through the years. A frigid walk in December.
Dawn's crackling rays cut me out of that dream, that descending spiral staircase
Strength stitched into tenderness. Flexing, I felt my deathly shell crack.
I believed conqueror myths--- Foolishly laid chase to a shadow.

These white ragged sneakers are worn out and my skin is thin-stretched hide
I feel it in my spine and asscheek and knees, glinting through me, light speckled paper
My hands reek like history, but I love the way you smell, enrapturing
My shoulders used to slump like a candle left in the beating sun.

The heat adversarial, prying and scuttling its way over my tongue.
It reminds us of youth, directionless drifting over sands untethered
The noise of the day and the quiet of the desolate dark depths
All just things. To justify my loneliness, to call home, a place to situate this futile question.

You would fight the tension with your body, spitting up phlegm and balling your fists
Holding breath when your tender cheeks are full of hot lead, desperate to swallow.
The clouds are swollen like bruises upon my temple, bulging with reminders.

Time passes in an instant. A flash of lightning.

The sun and moon and stars leash me in orbit; I, the ocean, lapping at the moon.
Ah, such beauty rocking on dark waves. I curl and sleep in your pale glow, fearless, now.

Drug of the Future

Your eyes are drooping closed
Early morning breaking wide
Buying cigarettes, watch you sway
    Like a leaf about to cut loose.

I smoke to pacify the fire in my gut.
I quit to pacify the God who raped me when I was a young boy.

I see that blood red hat, like that vile waving flag;
You've lost yourself completely. More than that, more
Than the victims nodding out at bus stations
Chasing the drug of the future, an appropriated past.
    Promise me the high my father felt!
        Slice away the forests I'll never see!
        To build their coliseums and dam our rivers.
                Some old racist Frenchman said
                All natives are born addicts
                We're all from somewhere.
            I'm an import like the whiskey I drown
                No ritual or ceremony, no mausoleum
            It's always getting worse, the withdrawls of their escapist fantasies

I smoke, and leash myself to the monument, the myth
They coaxed me out of righteous fury with.
Thank you great spirit for the gift of life. And tobacco, too.

[Free] [me] [Love]

Love, free me. Let me run out the doors and into the arms of people who make me feel safe, like a powerful and unquestionable woman.

Fill my heart so my mind can set itself as the rudder for this lonely ship, so I may sail to something indispensable.

Reject those painful lies, of my biology and inability to love the way I've watched and yearned for in so many people in my life so far, all small knots in these fateful threads.

And so, I set you free as well, there is no clamp upon your heart or soul, no binding spirit or hex holding you, as I've learnt the dangerous power of that spell love and wholeness cast, and it has trapped us.

Let us smash the shackles we've learnt ourselves, with your strength and my stillness, with your rage and my grief or my rage and yours, with my soft hands and your gentle eyes, break away and find the fountain and bathe and leave the pain behind, lest it become stones in our bellies when we need stones in our hands to lay the pieces of a foundation a home and a kitchen with double doors swung open for the wind spirits to carry our loved ones inside and sit around the table, a home warm and oh so crowded with healing fever.

4th Street and Strand

Old men playing jazz, the groove starts and stops
Practice, to set aside pride
Moments of peace come, and the music dissipates
the weight of poverty, loneliness
My enemy is far away, yet I spend my days
Vigilantly searching for a target
Every symbol suspect
Every caveat a warning sign
Each concession I make
Proof of my inner evil
Oh, we huddled masses, we sweat and bumble and clash
As ranchhands with iron prods
Herd towards the empty west
To graze until the land is empty
And I do not belong
Lest you ask me to stay

Time alone is dangerous
Vulturous mind picking
Like a rotten coyote
Tossed into a ditch off the 5 headed toward the angels
Time alone, be still
To revolt is to disobey
Play the game, press down
Apply pressure cooker in the skull

Heel to Toe

I could get addicted to pretty much anything. I'm a passionate person; my mind craves novelty, substance and substantial shifts. My body needs to find a rhythm beyond the ticks of the colonizers' clocks. Clock in, out. Time is a weapon, not unlike the words I scribble here in the tongue of zealots. Tryin' somethin else there, dancing round some fat swollen toes. If I crush em, know I mean it. Maybe. You're trying to treat a symptom, sober chips on the table. Look at you, the way you control and blame the subject, don't you mean the object, cause you're the subject of all the sentences flubbing out. Shit. I'm a subject, on a slide under a scope, dead in the crosshair. None of us get hot and armed enough to get mowed down, them snitches live in little metal wired critters in every cubicle and street crossing. No, I don't wanna get caught but I am dressing so provocatively. My skin gets me by better, but I know they got my name and gender marker at those stores I been poorly liftin from. Authenticity is what I call it. A test, my hypothesis: I ain't no sell-out and the army is calling my name so I can give my love the peace they deserve. Therapist telling me 'don't sacrifice myself' but shit it feels like nothing I do without sacrifice pulls me closer to being a whole ass closed system.

And I'm really just tryna open up. Open heart surgery. Crack them ribs, boy.

I Need a Secret

Sometimes, I am still
Lake so tranquil and clear
You see the trout dancing
On the pebbles of my core

Often I am rabid
Often I fear what they do
To dogs who can't learn to control
Their responses to this cruelty

I need to keep a secret
Please try to understand
A little part of myself, a little obsession
Tucked away like a bone in the backyard

It is not without consequence
For this will drive you mad. That distance--
I know you'll see my mind retreating
And desperately want it back in caring worry

We moved so fast, you begged for slowness
Bless us, we didn't. I'm sorry.
The gravity, the immensity of your being
Made me loose the ticking trail of time.

Let me have this
So you can keep yours.
A little taste of what it's like
To ride as strangers

Nesting in a Doll

I opened crazy and found a monster
Take monster and am standing in the maw of the closet
    Suddenly, slamming through the childhood bedroom wall.
        There are those lonely ocean eyes,
            A marine layer crossing blanketing us in cool respite
    I am 19 trying smokes
    A wildflower late opening in summer
        Try to scare me off the pill
        tell me it'll clot and kill
It is now and it is winter and it is cold
And I beg to hold you in that haunted house
Scare me with your stories of devils and ghosts
Crossing, laughing, speaking to them within daydream
    I opened crazy and found room
    For us to sob and grieve and seek the strength
        To maim and kill the monsters
        Building closets and two-tiered homes
    For the smoke show, for the sexy answers
To a dying world.

I am a chimney begging
"Please. I am human."
Are you the hearth?

Affirmations for the End of Days

Repeat with me. Repeat again as needed.
I can remember my childhood perfectly.
I can see through the lies of the world
    to the burning nugget of truth
    myself and everyone else carries inside them from birth
    an ember in bison horn.
I am a smoldering hearth,
    warm and crowded around by those
    with cold in their bones, and the laughter roars like fire.
I cannot choose who is drawn to me,
    I will choose what I pursue.
I choose who I can trust
    and I watch them earn it,
    systems and people fail and one hopes to change that.
I ask questions to learn more
    about those I love, and those around me,
    they respond without ill intent in their heart.
Those who have robbed me
    of my ability to trust are excluded from my life.
I am safe and I can make others feel heard.
I trust myself to make decisions in my own
    best interest and in protection of the collective.
I trust myself to listen to the compassionate soul
    when others speak their hurt.
I trust the love burning in my belly.

3+

Swallow enough and you build a homunculus in your stomach that rips its way out when you're hurt and angering, booming through dark clouds.

The rain falls upon my skin and I can say "we"

These warring, switching voices. I slip the mask on to hide my mutation. I've been bitter, when I was young, and only one of me remembers whereas the others forget and deny. I dress and act every which way, for my true self is a myth like amerika or freedom or satan. I accept good as a part of me, I accept evil as a part of me, we choose to go forward. I am a man and a woman and a dog and a tree, I believe women under patriarchy are wearing femininity to cover the pain endured for lifetimes, I believe priests are wearing the garb to escape that pain too. Except the latter gets a lot more power, a lot more damage. Worship is objectifying and karma is non-objective. The spirit is capable of grace and levity and pity and injustice. It follows through nazis and diesel engines and flowers alike, though. I find beauty in the sky and green and thunder, in smiling faces and embraces. Unlearning control feels like faith, and I consider myself smarter than God, weaker than the devil, and at the will of life or force or spirit or love. god. Then I am tired and worn and capital takes no prisoners so my bootstraps need more hands.

I am sobbing inside the machine and it is bleeding to death.

Dusty Heart

Let us gaze eye to eye
Afraid to soften and be cut. So,
I wield my body as a weapon
    Let it be a tool, instead
    Love poems don’t come easily
    Though I know it exists beyond this imperial romance.

I am disappointed by my pen’s ability
To catch it, to guide that lightning
Towards intimate beauty.
Love is right around me, succulent, abundant
And impossible to *find.*

When my heart craves to drink the rain,
And it comes for the flowers in bloom
And the fridge is full of fruit
    Ah, *there* it is.
    my dusty heart
    My pants caked in it, too
I’ll carry you when needed
    But you’ll have to ask me to
For I am mortified to decide
Upon my heart’s own fleeting beat
    This is a dandelion weed in the summer sun
    Straining and craning to watch the sea.

Deeper, Still

Niceness is a mask carved
By years-long beatings and confessions.
    Generations of division, of conquest
    The hydra, the profit-minded theme
My heart's beating quicker against my teeth
    This shuttered mouth fills with gas
    Choking on their noxious fumes
    Sure to burst, sure to burn uncleanly

I will lay my love beside me
    And open my heart to pain
    Set my smile down, beg that enfeebled spirit for rain
Let us build this home, with thick walls to keep us warm
    And a moat deep and vibrant, sparkling.
    Where we can gather and stack
    The red bricks of undoing

Defend the trees, the life, the lifeless
Destroy the machinery of death

    Each time the end is near---
    A corner appears
My mind is a winding labyrinth
    I was meant to be lost in
    Instead, creation unveiled along the way

HR 867

It is illegal to say/ The maniac soldiers must die/ Thugs with soaring death/ Terrorists wear stars or stripes/ They'll string you up if you fight to survive/ Keep your peace and clean your home/ The enemy's inside.

I'll disappear from the world/ Try not to feel terrified/ Build my dirty bombs, wrote my filthy lines/ It's fighting tanks with knives/ I wanna rip their faces off/ No more fighting nice/ Look how far that's gotten us/ Lonely, weak and crying/ Keep your Christmas tree up all year/ Pretend that you can't see the gaslit atrocities/ It's illegal to say/ The killers must die/ It's illegal to say/ This land is not for me or you, nor free/ It's illegal to say/ The corrupt is rotting me

It's illegal to see/ The dead children overseas/ And feel the grief of murder/ For cheering the wrong team

Silence is allowed, though. Encouraged/ Remember those you don't speak for/ Are just higher on the list than you/ Speak. Or hold your peace.

Aubrie

Within a dream, the aspen.
Woods carve along the feet like how a cat stretches upon waking
Atop a hill, a snaking river threads the scene
Carrying the babbling memory of your name.
Your suffering lives within me,
So young and childlike,
Punished for deference,
All kids are punks until they learn
The beatings stop with respect.
All punks are kids until we see
Love will kill us all --- consumptive.

Double barrel between your lips
Sin dancing through the mind
A looming father and eager mother,
The doctors say it's fine
"Take the pills, oil up the gears"
Freedom rings like a bell
Cracked head upon the bedroom floor
Red creeping, oil spill

O, hear my appeal to heaven
Dear cousin, rest in peace. No one told me when you were forced to leave.
You did not know the loving guardians
Who are now guiding me, unsteadily and uncertainly

For its not like what they taught you

On Sunday mornings, and I’m aching with regret

That you didn’t know to call, if you even had my number

I would’ve swept you up in a second, flown across state lines

In my mind, you are still so small

And surrounded by the love you deserve

Not the broken people you got.

I’m sorry, I’m broken. The authority and shame you got.

Fuck your god and fuck your nukes

Fuck your family, too.

I’ll kick in the door and spill your blood

Cause they’ll lock away me too.

The Weight of Reflective Being

I’ve spent a long time yearning
many nights dreaming of you
eons, lifetimes loving you.

You ring angelic in my ears, your laughter a joyous bell
Bringing such music; singing and embodying tender melody--
All at once. Resounding in my head, this golden sunbeam
And I’ve heard you weep. Your pain reminds me...
We met far ago, in different vessels
But I’d recognize yours anywhere
Despite this vast distance between us

Have you met the same people?
Have we sped the same roads?
Are we just borrowed?
From time, hands, fingers, jokes,
You feel the wondering, wandering: where to belong?
Asking the wrong questions: the meal is finished.
Now, go wash your bowl.
Stand at the sink and cast your spell.
Vibrant, the glare reflects off you, a patchwork, a mosaic—
Of everything
…that’s felt you….
of everyone who remembers your breath.

To be even a piece, just a sliver of your neck,

a stingy shard of stained glass, a slender tip of your finger

I release it all to inhale you. To wrap my arms

Around you, it’s no matter— time and struggle.

Love holds a moment forever and our embrace lasts but a flickering moment.

I can hardly wait for winter’s insensate fullness; I am spent.

We will huddle beneath the warmth of our quilt and make a patchwork home.

Blue Pill

Psychosis as a gift.
It is not solely me who is crazy,
Who sees the zealots, the lukewarm fear
The God leading the charge toward ruin.
I was looking for a pill to ease the pain, to love myself
In a miserable tough world.
    What I took made me tougher
    Slipperier, meaner
It is you who softened me
Sanded my sharp edges
And showed me a leash can be safe
    When I am from a simulacrum
    Things are heavy, and it is cracking my porcelain frame
There are shellings, bombings
A war raging in our minds
My pill will not make me rich
for it is that what I must eat:
    Those who carry much and return nothing--
Meat drippings from the pan after devouring
Screen showing the endless suffering
Worlds away yet not far at all
I may stop taking my meds
But I will let that pill dissolve
Endlessly beneath my tongue

I lie, I’ll cheat, I steal

All for you

Love has forged a weapon for us

So we may besiege this prison and be free

A year later, I still feel paper thin

Like some wild creature

Trapped and feral within human skin

As if nobody could touch me for long

The Ocean's in Love with the Moon

Everything I write is circling an abyssal gap I'm trying to solve.

That low, round humming in the asphalt. The sand blows off the beach and smooths the tar; nowhere else do my bare soles crave to feel the feeling of manmade earth. How ubiquitous the winds patient grinding is. It reminds me of your hips swaying against me as we dance slowly.

I ache, for this is imagination, we have never slow danced. I rush and step on your feet, eager for you to swallow me like the sea.

In the nightlight, I am liquid. Cool water filling the container of my body for I am the vessel and the sloshing and the drink as that divine orb strung from the pegboard starry heavens swings across the inky sky. The following is discipleship and a weaker glance yields humiliation through devotion to the overwhelming feeling called… the words escape me.

The music pounds and I shuffle my hulking feet. The more I move, these clay layers shake off as joints find new stinging.

And so the waves which I believe carry the wind across its surface in their arms catapulting those gusts along that particulate lumped beside the sidewalks, rushing grit across the pavement, like evening out scars across my cheeks. Not that I'd want that. For they are me, and in time all grinds down, the golems level the mountains, the concrete and brick and straw fails, yet the ocean will love the moon and nestle in each other's arms each passing glance.

Storytelling

Letting all you horses go
The horseshoe only bends that
Way when you gaze from
within the center
Theory streaming into me like
Sacred mist and holy vapor
        I ask to set your smoke down
                So I may kiss your lips
        We laugh as I offer
                To light your cigarette.
And plant my mouth upon yours
No more guilty conscience
Wherever we must go
My wholeness fully trusts
For I know beside your cooing rest
Stand so many things I'd hoped to be forgetting
Somewhere the future does not exist
No quantum threads to tangle up in

And there beyond unknowing

Lies us,
in each others arms;
Eternity

Heaven on the Beach with You

Potential life
Acidifying tide gnawing
away the prismatic coral beds, unmade
Forms embraced, we silhouette the bay and the sheets tossed aside
Gazing back and straight ahead, owl heads turning,
Toward colliding inevitabilites---
Our eyes drawn by some masterful blade
Insides red hot with Calvin, cold like space
Destiny is a stumbling series of soliloquies
Your timbre floats above the din
Foam pressed against aurum ear
A nibble from your lips like fish testing bait
I can hear life writhing beneath our feet
Toes tender in the sand, pressed hard
Our bodies press harder, gentle and pleading
Pushing, struggling to envelop
The two sides of our magnet together

For a brief moment, an infinite era
Our souls weave together
Brackish and fresh, boundaries of skin
Melting into one, and we never pull apart

Never let me go
Carry me, gull upon sea breeze

god Guide

There’s no sureness,
Forward looking, towards death and eternity
Backward pushing, towards the known
Positive propulsion, the arrow flies in half-lengths
Kicking up dust like change and collapse
Dimensions.

A ring nestled on my finger.
Arranged marriage to the desert,
You tell me I remind you of blue
And of glowing yellow, too;
        they remind me of blood flowing
                Through a pulsating heart
                The dark purple of the nighttime.

I ask for an answer and
The silence is deafening
It used to shake my fillings, that emptiness
Like the low rumble of the bass next door.
        Here is a place for god and you to fill.
I am utterly devoted, ya albi
I am utterly terrified, ya rouhi
I am utterly hopeless and faithful that
The future holds immense pain.

And love without grief is a golden calf,
I sob as we may speak for the last time

For each goodbye is like a coffin nail.

Here Lies Two

The distraction wanes
I am left with my body
Pushing out muck

Here lies two
    Wrapped in burial shroud
    From ages and ages and eons ago

I think of you so I think of everything
Words of advice run through me
Like smoke in the wind

Inspiration

Plants. Oaks with crawling vines

and branches spiraling towards the sky.

Things that bother you, or make you question what you think of me.

The color blue. It’s many forms as earth or sea or sky.

Soft, warm lighting. The way your cheekbones glow beneath filaments.

The cold. The way it saps my face and hands

and I am eager to hold you.

Fields of wildflowers.

Seeing people talking, laughing, and the ones watching

to learn how to do as well.

Fists pummeling flesh, the crackling of bone

A campfire with fuel and seats for us to untether in the orange fumbling

Flesh cut open like butterflying chicken.

Dicing an onion.

Washing the dishes.

The sun when we’ve struggled to not remain in bed forever.

The smell of your perfume as we pass.

The anger and fear in your voice when I say

the world thinks we’re pretty.

My beauty and its fleeting shallowness,

Your beauty and its unfathomable depth.

Picking at my skin.

Watching the cats play in the night.

The moon and how close he feels.

The way your hips feel swaying and bending in my hands,
    your breasts and breath rising, falling.
Dreams where I am elsewhere.
The ocean spray.
A heavy and slow riff, like grief, like pain.
The shade of a tree, whether the sun burns hot or cool.
The taste between your thighs, struggling to make heard
    the sounds you leak as we sleep afterwards.

Seared flesh.

It is Anger Coarsing Through Me

Boredom, frustration, agonizing imprisonment
A gap in hopeful feelings rule, grinding to a halt
Just a brief escape, please, just a bed to call our own
    A mantra, repeated
I'd like to know what to do with my time
Besides waste it, besides spend it waiting
    (I am what I do, right?)
I am a taste
Of the bottom of the barrel
Some sell-out poser loser
Who can't figure out what's hurting me
Who can't find the time or focus
    To do very much of anything.
I should be dragged out back and shot
For pissing in the wind for too damn long
The burden is mine to shoulder, the weight of unkempt belonging
This fire is scary and I am no fearless Heracles, or unbreakable Atlas.
    They've captured kinder folks for less. Stronger folks.
                Why am I regressing
                To some older, stupider caveman
Take it out and bear it, willful, crushing
My shoulders in the sun
I look in the mirror
To taste the barrel of my gun
    There's nowhere *safe* to point it but myself.

Shoelaces

I’ve understood for a while now
the impermanence
Learnt the ways which nature churns
and history’s rancid,
how I wake each day and have no choice
every day a different imbalance of agony and shame
I hope I don’t sound prideful for making observations
See how everything flows together
I mean, like,
water is from water from long ago and
air has burned from the sun and will never disappear, truly
these things are tiny and inconsequential
every little moment, they’re so minuscule
no boundary or identity when looking so closely---
that’s how I would be. I’d compress my spine like a can in a crusher;
it all fits together and we’re here
gazing at an incomplete fullness
and the breeze dances along your neck

It all leads to ruin. Fungal rule.
Learning the world I thought myself a controller
Wrap the dripping ribbons of my mind around all of it
Tear it apart and get to the bottom of it all
Then, maybe, figure out what was gnawing
at the back of my skull.

Terror to realize there was no way to claw beyond

that current moment

and that current place

I learned about black holes when I was young

and looked to the stars and wanted to soar through them

and my family would be really proud and I could just be this thing

and nothing would come between it

but there is this pull and this loss

this sinking feeling that it's all a fake

that it's just barely hanging on

fuck, that's true, we really were

you put the pieces together and there's a bunch of

black holes all around you just trying to consume

whatever is nearby because it's not evil or hungry

that's what they're meant to do

and you get closer and closer

and it's gone forever.

you've heard, nothing escapes.

There are cycles I find myself in part of

it always feels like something awful is building

like it's headed towards some unfinished, untimely end

I couldn't escape it, my whole life felt it

self-annihilation

A product of the system around me

That taught harmony is found through control

And knowledge will let me break from self-judgment

Put the pieces together logically, control it

conquer it. Taught to think that way.

I didn't understand why their process wouldn't put my pieces together

Why it always led to giving up and scattering across the mirror

That *vision* in childish eyes:

Staring at heaven's pinholes and dreaming of escape

I'd climb the tree because it was as close as I could get to holy

the moon was a place to land

This occupying force has an obsession with that desolate, lonely jewel.

Maybe it wasn't me, maybe it was *their* fantasy

all knotted up in my brain,

Find it, make myself a bed and

I wouldn't sleep.

Found myself chasing the moon across the night

Giddy and deliriously, reveling in the quiet and the

Darkness that absence brings

A pit opened up and swallowed me so I moved back home.

But it never really was anything but a place to haunt

I've never known when I should leave

The moment we arrive, I have

overstayed my welcome

I think I have found a way to break my cycle

To bind that chasing feeling to something

dead and left behind me.

No direction or sense where I am heading.

For this is not a quest led by knowledge

But a kinship with the dirt and sea.

Vase

Thought: to exist fully is to exist unchanging.
A poor assumption.
To be unchanging is to be dead, fool.
In you I am beautiful, my chameleon skin.
A deep voice in me begged for you,
It and you tell me I am good

Gentle hands warrant soft clay,
I trace the shape of you
twisting into form before me.
Michelangelo said he did not sculpt David
He found him, dug him out of a mountain's flesh
He scraped away the rubble and dusted him off
a dead stone body unearthed
As my fingers trace your thighs and ribs and lips
As I let my eyes lose focus, and sink behind my skull...
Beyond his humility there is truth—
Zeus didn't birth Athena, the story goes
She sprung from his skull, fully-formed
Wisdom — toadstools crowning after rain, after death
Wisdom--- the friend of the fool

You lay before me, the soft light on your bare skin

A vase isn’t *made* from a lump of earth

It is breathed life, and you feel hot breath between your legs

We forget the millions of years of rocks grinding against each other

In the depths of our soil.

From heat, something is born and becomes itself.

Solar Flare Dreaming

My soul is soft with love
A ripe peach
Grown in a neighborhood
Where the hungry pick and devour
Flesh like the soft earth
The cries of pain across the face
    Have made me tender and soft
Within it I find that pit
    You must chuck away, so long--
    Bloom again in time.
A gap between my spine and mind
    An aching following since I was pushed
    Out into the asphalt wastes
    Atop forgotten, murdered, fading knowledge

Eat bravely from the tree
    I worship the earthen snake.
That reminds me, sweetness is a gift
    No hell, no masters, only the flowing
    Healing waters in our eyes
I will graze upon your lips like a doe
    Cradled in threaded sunlight
I worship at the feet of beauty
My knees buckle at your sight

Voice like rushing streams
behind my eyelids,
a dream
Of waterways beside the sidewalks
Filled with carps and swaying grass
So when I kneel, prostrated
We may drink like stags from the stream

I feel myself ripping apart
My face unpeeled, a piece of rind

It feels like I am close to the end, again.
Like I am doing something wrong.
Like everyone is laughing at me. Hating me.
I don’t understand how that isn’t true.

Nothing sounds poetic from my pen until this feeling passes.